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INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 3702  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 3394  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 8853  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [NP](#)  
SUBJECT: UML PROTESTS PEACEFUL IN THE SOUTH AND WEST

REF: A. KATHMANDU 2519

[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 2529

Classified By: CDA Elisabeth Millard. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Six Thousand Participate in Peaceful Demonstration in Pokhara  
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[1](#)1. (C) On November 25, CPN-UML held a peaceful mass meeting to protest against the King and in favor of democracy in Pokhara, western Nepal. Emboff observed the demonstration and found it was peaceful and that authorities did not try to prevent it from taking place. The demonstrators paraded through town before hearing speeches by UML Party leaders. Emboff estimated that the crowd numbered about 6,000, sharply different from the UML's claim that 50,000 people took part. This rally followed the November 16 rally in Butwal, in which 15,000 to 130,000 people were said to have taken part (reftel B). UML sources also charged that the government again blocked the highways leading to Pokhara. Police sources explained that security service personnel strictly checked vehicles going to Pokhara, which slowed the traffic, but allowed them to proceed. Emboff observed groups in the parade carrying banners indicating that they were from outlying areas as well as groups of school children in uniform. She also saw people getting on buses to return home after the demonstration dispersed.

CPN-UML Head Urges King to Respond Positively  
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[1](#)2. (U) CPN-UML General Secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal told those gathered in Pokhara on November 25 that the "King might have to face the International Criminal Court (ICC) if he did not take the Parties-Maoist understanding wisely and forced the Maoists to return to violence." M.K. Nepal also urged the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) to support the people and not the King. Referring to Senator Leahy's November 18 statement that "it may not be long before the army is faced with a fateful choice," M.K. Nepal commented that "The army has also killed people. So its chief also should have to come within the ICC's purview if he undermines the people." He stressed that anyone repressing pro-democracy movements would "have to face the people's court." He asserted that the King had two options, to go with the people or to opt for all-out war. "If the King chooses the second option, then it will invite the end of the institution" of the monarchy, he stated. The UML leader added that the Parties would accept a ceremonial monarchy "only if the King withdraws the royal moves of

October 4, 2002 and February 1, 2005 and concedes his mistakes."

Parties Continue to Mobilize Public

13. (U) CPN-UML also held a peaceful rally in the southern town of Janakpur on November 27, in which the Party claimed 45,000 people took part. (Note: Earlier claims by UML have been inflated. We cannot verify this claim. End note.) As in the other recent demonstrations, police reportedly strictly checked all vehicles entering the area. The next CPN-UML rally is set for Kathmandu on December 2. The Nepali Congress party has planned a rally in Bharatpur on November 29 and Biratnagar on December 3.

Comment

14. (C) The political parties are working to mobilize support in the outlying areas, something that can be done only with acquiescence and Maoist support. The fact that these protests remain peaceful is a sign that the government is reacting with moderation to the 12-point understanding. It also is an indication that the Maoists have not yet decided to turn the Party organized demonstrations in the cities violent. The threat and concern that they will do so remains.

MILLARD